

them either with the Secretary of Agriculture, or the Director, Office of Civil Rights, USDA, Washington, DC 20250 or with the office established by the State agency to handle discrimination grievances or complaints. All complaints received by State agencies that allege discrimination based on race, color, national origin, or age shall be referred to the Secretary of Agriculture or the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, USDA. A State agency may process complaints that allege discrimination based on sex or disability if grievance procedures are in place.

Subpart D—Participant Benefits

§ 249.8 Level of benefits and eligible foods.

(a) *General.* State agencies must identify in the State Plan the fresh, nutritious, unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables and herbs that are eligible for purchase under the SFMNP. Eligible foods may not be processed or prepared beyond their natural state except for usual harvesting and cleaning processes. Dried fruits or vegetables, such as prunes (dried plums), raisins (dried grapes), sun-dried tomatoes, or dried chili peppers are not considered eligible foods in the SFMNP. Potted fruit or vegetable plants, potted or dried herbs, wild rice, nuts of any kind (even raw), honey, maple syrup, cider, seeds, eggs, meat, cheese, and seafood are also not eligible for purposes of the SFMNP. “Locally grown” means produce grown only within a State’s borders but may be defined by State agencies to include border areas in adjacent States. Under no circumstances may produce grown outside of the United States and its territories be considered eligible food.

(b) *The value of the Federal benefits received.* (1) The Federal SFMNP benefit level received by each participant, whether individual or household, may not be less than \$20 per year or more than \$50 per year, except that:

(i) A State agency that operated the SFMNP in FY 2006 may continue to issue the same level of benefits that was provided to participants in FY 2006, even if the benefit level was less than \$20;

(ii) Participants served by a State agency that operated the SFMNP

through a CSA program model in FY 2006 may, at the State agency’s discretion, continue to receive the same CSA benefit levels that were provided to such participants in FY 2006, subject to the conditions set forth at § 249.14(e)(3), Distribution of Funds; and

(iii) Participants who are participating in the SFMNP through a CSA program may receive a higher total benefit level than participants participating in a check or coupon program model, as long as that level is consistent for all Senior CSA program participants and does not exceed the \$50 annual maximum per individual or household, except as provided in paragraph (b)(1) of this section.

(2) The total value of SFMNP benefits provided in a combination of program models, such as coupons/checks and bulk purchase, may not exceed the \$50 maximum benefit level set forth in paragraph 249.8(b)(1).

(c) *Participant or household benefit allocation.* (1) All SFMNP participants living in the areas served by the State agency must be offered the same amount of SFMNP benefits, regardless of the program model(s) used by that State agency.

(2) Benefits may be allocated on an individual or on a household basis.

(3) Foods provided are intended for the sole benefit of SFMNP participants and are not meant to be shared with other non-participating household members.

(4) Participants must receive SFMNP benefits free of charge.

§ 249.9 Nutrition education.

(a) *Goal.* Nutrition education shall emphasize the relationship of proper nutrition to good health, including the importance of consuming fruits and vegetables.

(b) *Requirement.* The State agency shall integrate nutrition education into SFMNP operations and may satisfy nutrition education requirements through coordination with other agencies within the State. State agencies wishing to coordinate nutrition education with another State agency or organization must enter into a written cooperative agreement with such agencies to offer nutrition education relevant to the use and nutritional value